

Public Art and Cultural Commission

October 24, 2013

Members Present:

Robert Todd, Chair

Guillermo Rodriguez, Vice-Chair

Gwynne Rukenbrod

Julie Calhoun-Roepnack

Sharon Trammel

Victor Palomino

Constance Richards

Jaan Ferree

Staff Present:

Brenda Mills, Office of Economic Development

Chris Corl, General Manager, US Cellular Center Asheville

Caroline Long, Office of Economic Development

Nikki Reid, City Real Estate Manager

Debbie Ivester, PRCA Assistant Director

Jon Fillman, Office of Economic Development

Basil Punsalan, Event Specialist

Sam Powers, Director of Economic Development

Chair Todd called the meeting to order at 4:07 pm.

1. Approval of September Minutes

Sharon motioned to approve the September minutes. Julie seconded the motion and all approved.

2. PACC Sub-Committees

Robert reminded the commissioners that the sub-committee guidelines were revised and approved during the September meeting.

3. Public Art Update

Debbie gave the public art update. She mentioned that an item was missing from the Public Maintenance and Repair handout. The Triangle Park Mural project will also include a splashguard along the base of the mural, with \$5,000 allocated to the project. They believe the project will most likely run more towards \$10,000. It will be a concrete splashguard to ensure that drainage flows away from the wall. Chair Todd asked what the dimensions of the guard would be and if you would be able to stand on it--just to make sure we maintain the ability to interact with the mural. Vice Chair Rodriguez asked how this came up and Ms. Ivester stated that with all the rain the mural has gotten very muddy, and that there was more water flow there than they realized. Other projects they are working on include the urban trail marketplace redesign, replacing the face masks on the urban trail curtain call, replacing the stolen pieces from the Appalachian stage, replacing the burnt out neon light inside Grove's Vision (Parks Maintenance does not have neon bulbs on hand), and the crossroads donor plaque.

The USCC terrazzo floor is nearly complete. Ms. Calhoun-Roepnack commented that it looks very good and Ms. Ivester stated that for all purposes it is complete—all that is left is installing mats near the front doors. The floor installation came in under budget at \$18,107 which means it is an affordable artwork piece in the City's collection. Vice Chair Rodriguez commented that the video was also a great addition to the project. Ms. Ivester added that the IT dept is still working on the time lapse photography for the terrazzo floor installation.

Ms. Ivester stated she does not have an update on the Nature Center, Beaucatcher Greenway, Town Branch Greenway, or Clingman Forest projects. The call for artists for the 51 Biltmore project closes on October 30th, and they have already received over 50 applicants for the project. Mr. Punsalan stated that there were various types of proposals submitted, including sculptural work, canvas work, and mural work, including several local artists. Vice Chair Rodriguez stated that opening it up to national artists was a good idea, since there was over 50 people interested.

4. Introduction to the Office of Economic Development

Ms. Mills turned it over to Sam Powers, Director of Economic Development. Mr. Powers expressed thanks for being here again, and stated that the PACC has transitioned into the Economic Development Department. The OED is excited to work together with Parks & Rec to get more intra-city projects done, noting that the Economic Development Commission is part of the City's 5x5 program. This program includes arts & culture and the OED is very excited to be a part of the mix.

Nikki Reid introduced herself as the real estate manager for the City of Asheville and explained her functions, including greenway acquisition, administering leases, and acquiring/selling City property. She stated she is glad that public art is now part of Economic Development.

Chris Corl is the General Manager of the US Cellular Center (formerly Civic Center). He stated that his role is to help with events, bring in more conferences, conventions, and concerts and to bring more people to Asheville. He has worked with Basil & Debbie in coordinating the terrazzo floor in the USCC. Sam stated that tomorrow is the beginning of the first Mountain Oasis Electronic Music Summit and there is lots of national publicity on the USCC and the City of Asheville. Mr. Corl stated that Billboard Magazine (among other publications) picked up on MOEMS and had raving reviews of Asheville's transition to a national music destination. In addition, this weekend should generate 4 to 5 million dollars in revenue. Chair Todd stated that Mr. Corl's ideas and suggestions about art installations in the USCC have a great home in this commission, and that the commissioners have a wealth of knowledge in wide-ranging art-related topics.

Jon Fillman handles the logistics of using the City's outdoor spaces and services. He stated that OED has expanded their program to look into more public partnerships. Mr. Fillman works with many nonprofit orgs that look to have special events in Asheville--much of his job is working out the logistics for the events. He recently released an RFI for new signature event, to gauge temperature and see if there is interest for this opportunity. If there is, he will ask City Council about the possibility of an RFP. Mr. Fillman orchestrates approximately 350-400 special events in Asheville per year, including neighborhood block parties, ticketed events, and festivals. At this time, he is coming up on the slower season. This means Mr. Fillman is thinking about planning, partnerships, and ways to develop businesses through events in the City, and showing the businesses how public space can be used as incentive to bring businesses to Asheville. Chair Todd stated there was public comment about making the special event process as frictionless as possible and recognized the effort Mr. Fillman has made in facilitating this process, and that there are individuals on the commission who might be able to help Mr. Fillman with

that process. Chair Todd stated that one key part of PACC changing from a board to a commission was adding the cultural aspect, which is an important task for the City. Mr. Fillman stated that PACC is now part of the Event Review Team and that they are taking the policy out into the public. Mr. Fillman stated that any suggestions in this process are greatly appreciated.

Stephanie Monson is out today, but Brenda stated she would like to be here for the meeting at the first of the year and there is a handout in the packet about her projects and interests.

Ms. Ferree asked if anyone knows if John McKibbin is going to exercise his right to do something with the Guastavino Monument. Mr. Powers stated that the civil suit that was filed contesting the sale of the property has since been dismissed, but this has extended the due diligence date for McKibbin group to explore options for the site. Due diligence has been extended to mid-November. He also stated that from an appearance and safety perspective, the City has asked to go ahead and proceed with demolition of the property and the City is in the process of receiving construction/demo bids. Construction should happen in the January to March time frame. A contemporary surface parking lot will be there instead. There have been a couple of retaining wall issues, but there will be something new there within the next few months.

5. Staff Report and Information

Brenda stated that there is now new guest Wi-Fi in City hall. Gwynne stated that there have been issues with it and Brenda stated that she would look into getting some troubleshooting info.

New meeting idea: Brenda stated that she would be interested in having the commission members have 5 to 7 minutes to talk about themselves and their specialties/backgrounds.

6. Old Business

Ms. Mills and Ms. Monson attended the CEOs for Cities in Grand Rapids, Michigan. CEOs for Cities is the initiative of a nonprofit that goes around to cities during a specific event time. ArtPrize was going on in Grand Rapids at the time and it was all over downtown, with sculptures outside and in hotels downtown. Brenda stated that they took a trolley through the historic district and then walking tours throughout Grand Rapids. StartGarden is an incubator that gives out \$5,000 seed money to start new ventures, and they were there as well. Heidi Rebier, Robin Cape, Mark Hunt, and Bill Sederburg also went and enjoyed the conference. Ms. Mills stated that there were all kinds of different arts represented in ArtPrize, and that many of the installations were immersive and brought the viewer in to interact with the art. The impact to downtown was 250,000 visitors, including families, older people, minorities, etc. The grand prize was 250k to the best installation. Chair Todd stated that there was an Asheville artist who entered that event, and asked if there was also city partnership from Grand Rapids in the event? Ms. Mills stated that the city provides sanitation, officers, etc. and that Amway is an investor in the event. It is a well organized event—busy but not disorganized. Chair Todd stated that it must be drawing heavily from local and regional artists, and is a great model of how something can be achieved in that way.

Ms. Calhoun-Roepnack stated that there are several tiles missing from the art installation that Kathy Triplett did—the tiles are the small ones that the children did, and that it does not look good. Ms. Ivester stated that they will do a walkthrough of the installation and see what needs to be done. She stated that they have backup blue tiles and Parks Maintenance can put those in.

Chair Todd stated that Appalachian Stage looks great and in pristine condition.

7. New Business

Vice Chair Rodriguez went to the ADA meeting with City staff on Monday, in order to see what the process was. They talked about cigarette butts being everywhere and how to dispose of them properly.

Vice Chair Rodriguez proposed that if the City is looking for receptacles, that there could be an artist commissioned to incorporate art into the receptacle. This is a great opportunity for functional art. Chair Todd asked if the receptacles would be provided by the City, or whether they would have to be City-approved? Vice Chair Rodriguez stated he was not sure, but that the solutions were enforcement or finding a creative place to put them. Vice Chair Rodriguez stated that he let Ms. Ball know PACC is here to help with that if it is an issue they want to look into.

Chair Todd asked for clarification on the issues with the City's lower parking lot; Mr. Palomino, Ms. Trammel, and Mr. Todd's cards didn't work today. Ms. Mills is going to check with HR to see if the cards can be re-keyed.

With regard to meeting dates, Chair Todd stated that he thinks PACC would be all right without a scheduled November or December meeting. He feels as though they have tied up several projects already, but if something comes up they would be able to call a meeting.

Chair Todd expressed an interest in having an informal get-together (at least once per year), and would like to have it between now and the end of the year.

Ms. Trammel made a motion not to have a meeting in November or December and Ms. Ferree seconded with none opposed.

Ms. Rukenbrod asked if there is interest in having a poll about a new meeting time for PACC. There was a possibility of it being a Tuesday at noon meeting. She will send out the poll.

Additional public comment

Mr. Powers stated that the TDA (the 'owner' of the hotel tax) is evaluating how 1% of the hotel tax (which is for bricks and mortar product development) could be administered in a different way. On December the 11th from lunch until 5pm they are having a Destination Development summit in the USCC. They are trying to reach out to community organizations and arts/cultural organizations. Mr. Powers stated this is a good time for the arts and culture community to be involved in shaping the program as it moves forward.

Chair Todd adjourned the meeting at 4:58 pm.